MARVEL
DOCTOR
STRANGE
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FEB

CRY OF THE SPIRIT
A COOL AUTUMN EVENING BRINGS A FAMILIAR VISITOR TO THE SANCTUM SANCTORUM OF
DR. STRANGE
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GOOD EVENING, SARA. WONG TELLS ME THAT WE ARE IN FOR QUITE A SHOW TONIGHT!
INDEED, MASTER! MR. NITOBE IS A TRUE MASTER OF KIAI-JUTSU. I WAS JUST TELLING MS. WOLFE HOW IMPRESSED I WAS BY HIS DEMONSTRATION LAST NIGHT.
I'VE SEEN THE POSTER ADS FOR THIS AKIRA NITOBE. HE'S SUPPOSED TO BE ONE OF JAPAN'S LIVING TREASURES... A MASTER OF KIAI-JUTSU, IS IT?

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YES, SARA--KIAI-JUTSU--THE SPIRIT SHOUT.
NOW, SHALL WE BE OFF?
THAT SOUNDS GOOD TO ME! GOOD NIGHT, WONG!
YOU KNOW, SARAH, I'VE NEVER SEEN AN AUTHENTIC DEMONSTRATION OF KIAI-JUTSU.
I KNOW WONG IS NOT EASILY IMPRESSED, BUT STILL, I AM A BIT SKEPTICAL.
THAT'S PRETTY FUNNY!
FUNNY?
YOU, OF ALL PEOPLE, BEING SKEPTICAL OF PARANORMAL POWERS!
AH, BUT OF ALL PEOPLE, I KNOW HOW MANY PRETENDERS AND HOW FEW TRUE PRACTITIONERS OF "PARANORMAL ARTS" THERE ARE!

A BLOCK AWAY...
GET 'IM! GET THAT FILTHY SUCKER!
END OF THE LINE, SCUM!
PLEASE! NO!
WHY?! WHY DO YOU CHASE ME?!!
YOU COME INTO OUR TURF AND TALK DIRT TO MY KID SISTER---
--THEN TRY TO COME ONTO HER!
WELL, YOU AIN'T COMIN' ON TO ANY-ONE AGAIN!
NO! WAIT! WHAT?

WHERE IS YOUR COURAGE NOW, BOYS?
JEEZ! OUR CLOTHES... THEY'RE GONE!
TURN AND FACE ME, INSTEAD OF ONE HELPLESS BOY!
IT'S YOUR CHOICE, LEAVE AT ONCE OR I'LL MAKE MORE THAN YOUR PANTS DISAPPEAR!
NO, MAN! DON'T! WE'RE GONE ALREADY!
THE HOUNDED BOY RUNS OFF... SEEMINGLY AS AFRAID OF HIS SAVIOR AS HE WAS OF THE THUGS.
EASY, LAD! YOU'VE NO REASON TO FEAR!
POOR BOY! HE'S STILL SCARED TO DEATH! SHOULD WE TRY TO STOP HIM?
NO, HE SHOULD BE ALL RIGHT NOW. LET'S CONTINUE WITH OUR PLANS FOR THE EVENING.

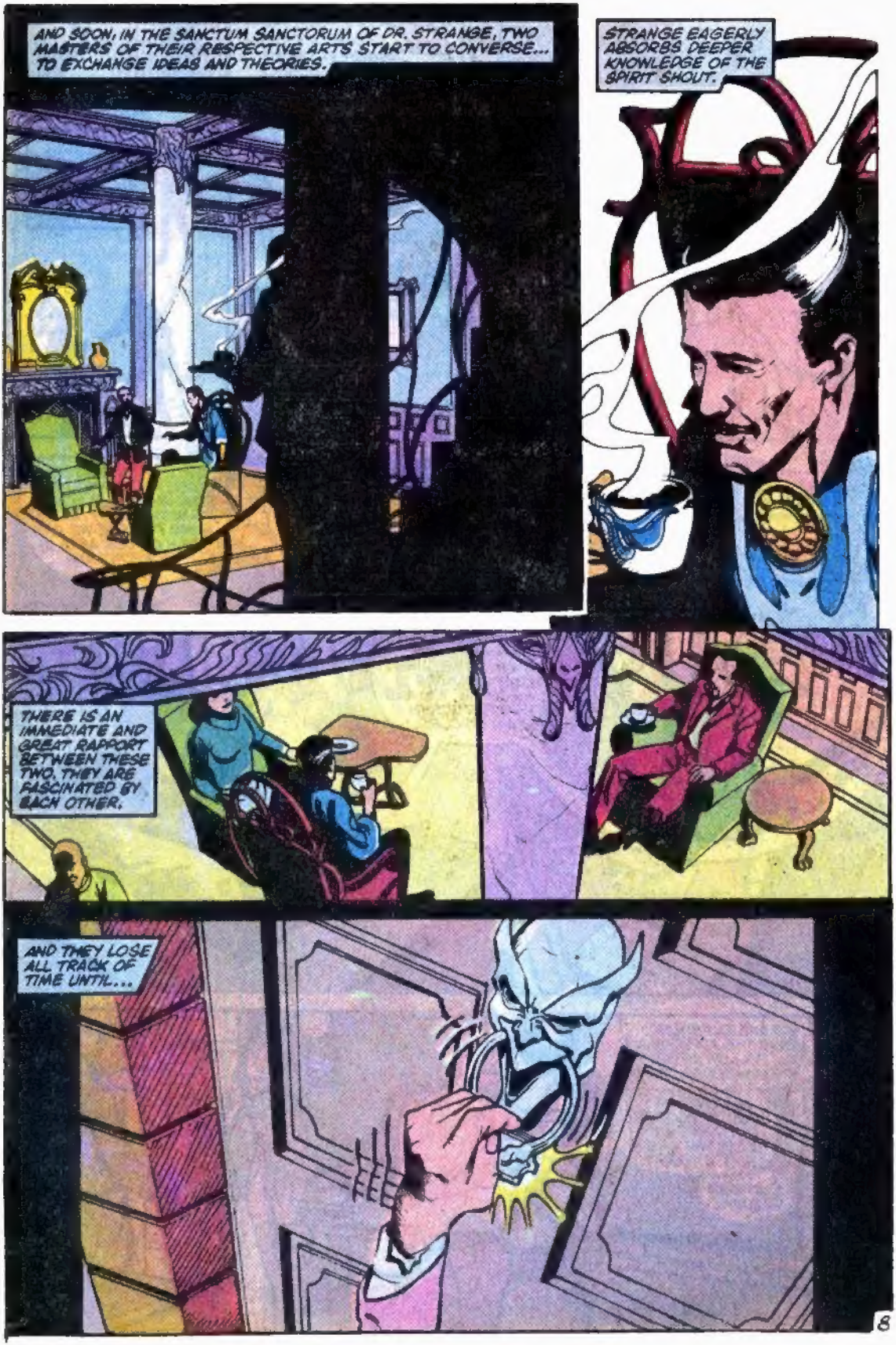
TEN MORE MINUTES OF WALKING BRINGS STRANGE AND SARA TO THEIR DESTINATION.

SHORTLY, WITHIN THE PACKED THEATER...
GOOD EVENING, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN. I AM AKIRA NITOBE. I AM HERE AS PART OF A CULTURAL EXCHANGE PROGRAM BETWEEN YOUR GREAT COUNTRY AND MY NATIVE JAPAN.
IT IS MY HOPE YOU WILL LEARN FROM AND ENJOY MY DEMONSTRATION OF KIAI-JUTSU.

ASSISTING ME IS MY DAUGHTER, KIKO.
THE MOST BASIC FORCE IN THE UNIVERSE IS "KI". IT FLOWS THROUGH EVERY LIVING THING AND CAN BE SUMMONED AND DIRECTED IN A NUMBER OF WAYS. I SPECIALIZE IN THE SPIRIT SHOUT ...OR KIAI.
SUCH CONCENTRATED KI CAN HURT OR HEAL. IT CAN HELP CAUSE OR CURE DISEASE. KI IS A TWO-EDGED SWORD TO BE WIELDED VERY CAREFULLY.
I WILL START WITH A SMALL DEMONSTRATION OF FOCUSED KI POWER.
A CANDLE 15 YARDS DISTANT CAN BE EXTINGUISHED LIKE SO...
5

I WILL NOW BREAK THESE BOARDS WITH A KIAI. MAY I PLEASE HAVE TWO STURDY VOLUNTEERS FROM THE AUDIENCE?
THIS IS TOO GOOD AN OPPORTUNITY TO MISS, SARA. I'D LIKE TO SEE THIS CLOSE UP.
NOW SIR, IF YOU ARE WILLING, PLEASE CHARGE AT ME FROM ACROSS THE STAGE. BUT BE PREPARED TO BE STOPPED IN YOUR TRACKS.
AAAA

...WHEREAS SHARP SOUNDS PENETRATE...
...TO HELP SUCH MINOR INJURIES AS YOUR NOSE BLEED!
IT'S STOPPED!
WHEN THE DEMONSTRATION IS OVER, ALL PRESENT ARE SUITABLY IMPRESSED...
--INCLUDING DR. STRANGE.
AFTER THE SHOW, IN NITOBE'S DRESSING ROOM...
I THANK YOU FOR YOUR COMPLIMENTS, DR. STRANGE. SOMETHING OF YOUR ABILITIES IS KNOWN TO ME, YOU ARE RATHER FAMOUS IN CERTAIN CIRCLES.
WELL THEN, MISTER NITOBE, WOULD YOU AND YOUR DAUGHTER HONOR ME WITH A VISIT TO MY HOME? THERE WE CAN TALK OF OUR ARTS IN COMFORT AND PRIVACY.
GO AHEAD, FATHER! LEAVE THE ADDRESS AND I'LL FOLLOW AFTER I'VE STRAIGHTENED UP HERE.
ALRIGHT, MY PRETTY FLOWER! BUT DON'T BE LONG. YOU KNOW HOW I WORRY.
I KNOW FATHER!
7


AND SOON, IN THE SANCTUM SANCTORUM OF DR. STRANGE, TWO MASTERS OF THEIR RESPECTIVE ARTS START TO CONVERSE... TO EXCHANGE IDEAS AND THEORIES.
STRANGE EAGERLY ABSORBS DEEPER KNOWLEDGE OF THE SPIRIT SHOUT.
THERE IS AN IMMEDIATE AND GREAT RAPPORT BETWEEN THESE TWO. THEY ARE FASCINATED BY EACH OTHER.
AND THEY LOSE ALL TRACK OF TIME UNTIL...

MASTER!
WONG, GET MY MEDICAL BAG... SARA, CALL AN AMBULANCE!
I'M SORRY, FATHER. I DID NOT DEFEND MYSELF WELL. I DID NOT DO YOUR INSTRUCTION HONOR.
NONSENSE, MY FLOWER. BE STILL. REST.
AS I WAITED FOR A TAXI, A MAN JUMPED ME FROM BEHIND. I FOUGHT HARD, BUT I WAS SO SCARED... I COULD NOT KIAI. HE HAD A BIG KNIFE. HE CUT ME AND BEAT ME... AND THEN... HE...
...HE HAD HIS WAY. I'M SORRY FATHER... I HURT SO MUCH!
KIKO, PLEASE BE CALM.
HOW BAD IS SHE, STEPHEN?
VERY BAD SARA. I'VE DONE WHAT I CAN TO PREPARE HER FOR HER RIDE. BUT HER WOUNDS ARE VERY DEEP.
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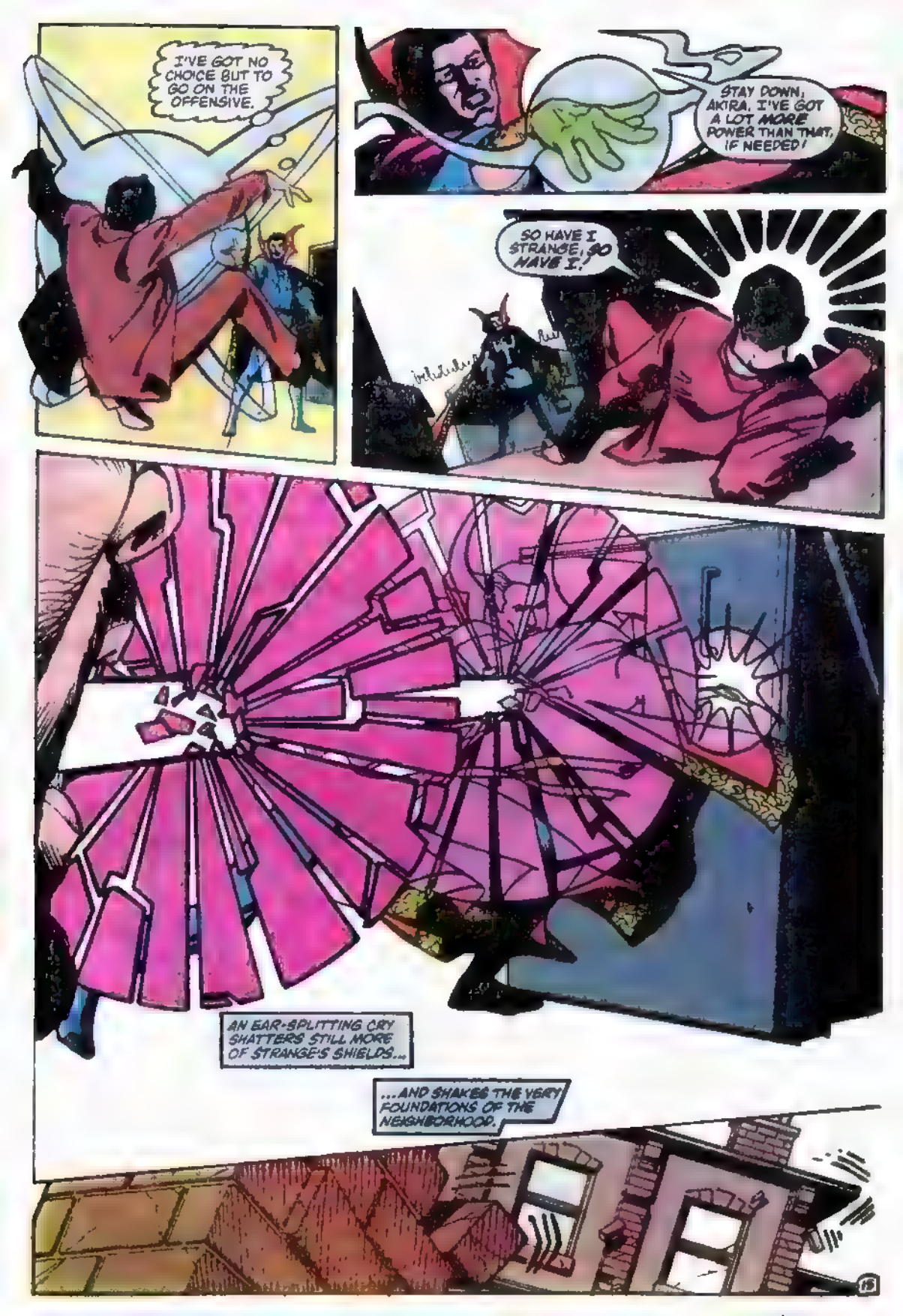
HOURS LATER, AT THE HOSPITAL...
THIS WAITING IS HORRIBLE. THE NURSE SAID THAT KIKO WILL BE IN SURGERY FOR AT LEAST TWO MORE HOURS.
SHE IS BEYOND THE AID OF MY MEDICAL OR MYSTICAL ARTS. KIKO IS ALSO BEYOND HER FATHER'S HELP.
SHE HELD THE TORN SLEEVE OF HER ATTACKER...
PERHAPS IT CAN LEAD ME TO HIM.
PLEASE ALLOW ME TO COME! THIS WAITING WILL DRIVE ME INSANE!
ALL RIGHT, BUT YOU WILL HAVE TO FOLLOW AS BEST YOU CAN. I MUST LEVITATE ABOVE THE CITY TO TRY TO USE THIS SLEEVE AS A PSYCHIC MAGNET. IT SHOULD BE ATTRACTED TO THE ATTACKER'S AURA.
NO PARKING
MY BEST CHANCE IS TO RETRACE THE ROUTE BETWEEN MY SANCTUM AND THE THEATER.
10

SHORTLY...
THERE HE IS...THAT FIGURE HIDING IN THE SHADOWS. I'D BEST CONTACT THE POLICE TO APPREHEND HIM. I DON'T DARE TAKE A CHANCE OF DOING SOMETHING LEGALLY INCORRECT. IT MIGHT ALLOW HIM TO BE RELEASED ON A TECHNICALITY.
MEANWHILE, A FEW BLOCKS AWAY...
HELLO, THIS IS AKIRA NITOBE. I'D LIKE A REPORT ON MY DAUGHTER'S CONDITION.

AH, THERE YOU ARE, AKIRA. I'VE SPOTTED KIKO'S ATTACKER JUST AHEAD IN THAT ALLEY. WE MUST CALL THE POLICE.
KIKO IS DEAD... AND THERE WILL BE NO NEED FOR THE POLICE.
AKIRA, WAIT!
I SHOULD CALL THE POLICE RIGHT NOW, BUT IT WOULD TAKE TOO MUCH TIME. I'VE GOT TO STOP AKIRA BEFORE HE TAKES MATTERS INTO HIS OWN HANDS.
YOU THERE!

TURN AND FACE YOUR DEATH.
TAKE COMFORT. IT WILL NOT BE QUITE AS PROLONGED OR PAINFUL AS THAT YOU INFLICTED ON MY DAUGHTER.
NOW, I'M COMING FOR YOU!
I'VE GOT TO PUT A STOP TO THIS!
HE ISN'T GOING ANYWHERE, AKIRA. I'VE SEALED OFF THE ALLEYWAY. GET A HOLD OF YOURSELF BEFORE YOU DO SOMETHING YOU'LL REGRET FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE.
STAY OUT OF THIS, STRANGE! WHAT I'LL REGRET FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE IS NOT HAVING MY DAUGHTER TO SHARE IT WITH! HE WILL PAY THE PRICE FOR THAT!
WHILE THE MYSTIC MASTERS TRY TO DECIDE HIS FATE, THE TERRIFIED AND WHIMPERING KILLER MAKES A VAIN ATTEMPT TO HIDE HIMSELF.

AKIRA, THIS CAN COME TO NO GOOD! STOP AND THINK!
IF YOU GIVE ME NO CHOICE, I'LL USE FORCE TO STOP YOU!
NOT ONE STEP CLOSER, AKIRA!
I WILL NOT BE STOPPED!
TOH
INCREDIBLE! HE BROKE THROUGH MY SHIELD! I BARELY GOT A SECOND ONE UP IN TIME!
NO MORTAL CAN PASS THROUGH MY MYSTICAL SHIELDS!
OOHH!
THIS IS UNBELIEVABLE! IT'S ALMOST LIKE TRYING TO STOP AN ATTACK BY THE DREAD DORMAMMU HIMSELF!


I'VE GOT NO CHOICE BUT TO GO ON THE OFFENSIVE.
STAY DOWN, AKIRA. I'VE GOT A LOT MORE POWER THAN THAT, IF NEEDED!
SO HAVE I, STRANGE, SO HAVE I.
AN EAR-SPLITTING CRY SHATTERS STILL MORE OF STRANGE'S SHIELDS...
...AND SHAKES THE VERY FOUNDATIONS OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD.

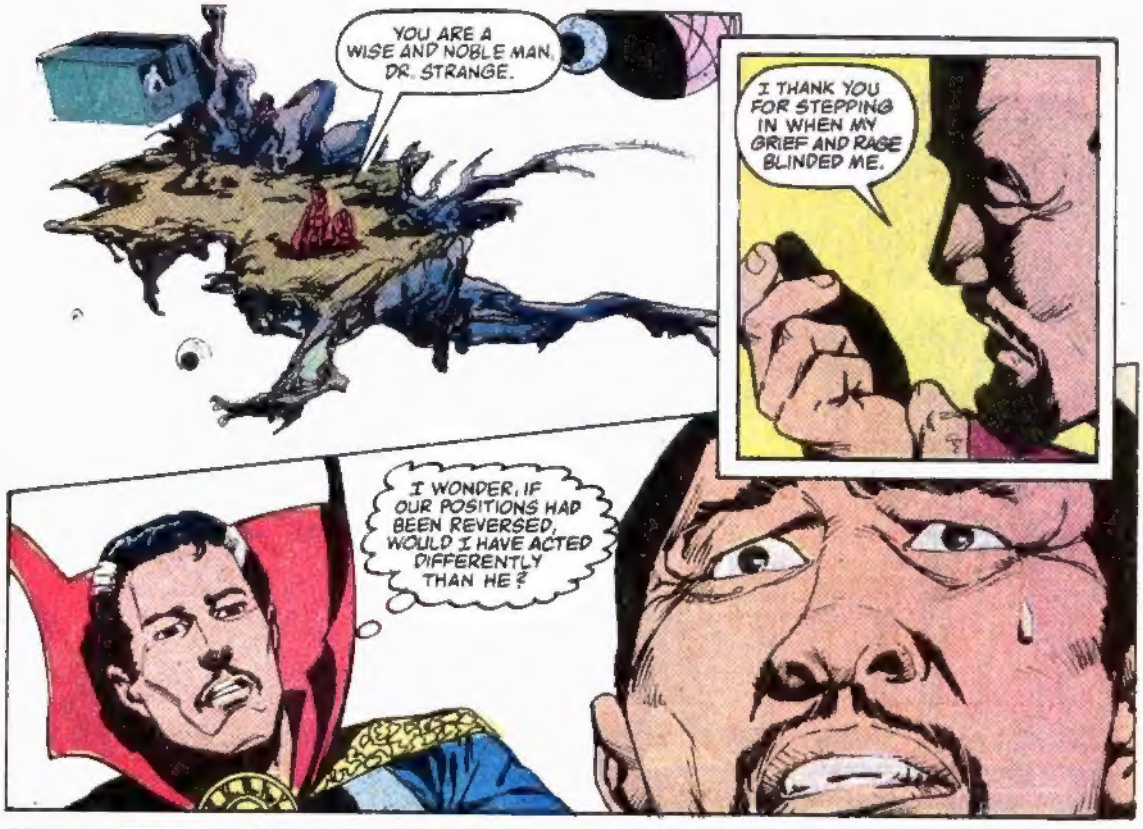
THIS IS COURTING DISASTER! OTHERS MAY GET HURT IF THIS KEEPS UP!
IT'S TIME TO TAKE THIS FIGHT... SOMEWHERE ELSE!
THERE'S NO ESCAPE, STRANGE! YOUR TRICKS AND SPELLS WON'T STOP ME!
I'VE GOT TO DEFEND MYSELF EVEN WHILE I ENLARGE MY AMULET! THIS IS NOT EASY!
AT LAST! THE DIMENSIONAL PORTAL IS LARGE ENOUGH! THESE BUILDINGS CAN'T TAKE MUCH MORE...
...AND NEITHER CAN I!

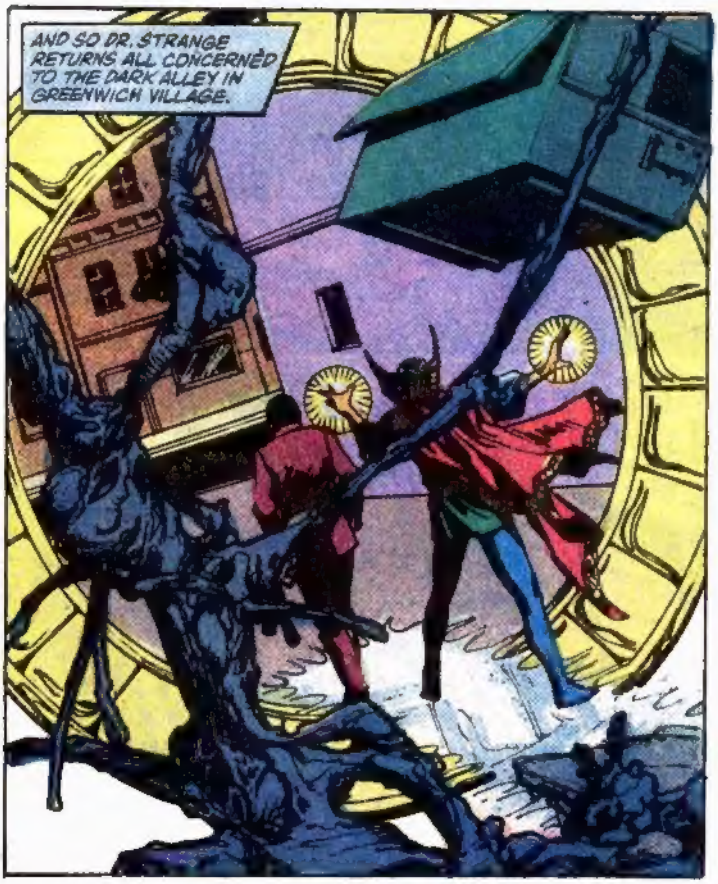
I'M NOT SURE WHAT'S GOING ON, BUT I'LL NOT BE LEFT BEHIND.
EVEN IN HIS ALL-CONSUMING RAGE, AKIRA NITOBE IS THROWN OFF GUARD. SUDDENLY, HE IS IN AN ALIEN DIMENSION... A VOID WHERE EARTHLY PHYSICS HOLD NO SWAY.
COMPLETELY UNNERVED NOW, THE MURDERER TRIES TO BARGAIN FOR HIS LIFE AND HIS SANITY.
PLEASE! STOP THIS! IT'S A NIGHTMARE! I'LL DO ANYTHING TO STOP THIS!

FOR THE FIRST TIME, STRANGE GETS A GOOD LOOK AT WHO HE IS DEFENDING...
THE BOY I SAVED FROM BEING ATTACKED EARLIER THIS EVENING!
MY FAMILY, THEY'RE RICH! THEY'LL BUY YOU A CAR, A HOUSE, ANYTHING TO MAKE UP FOR YOUR DAUGHTER!
THE SHOCK OF RECOGNITION RENDERS STRANGE IMMOBILE FOR AN INSTANT.
HOWEVER, THE BOY'S OFFER RE-STOKES THE FLAMES OF NITOBE'S RAGE!
REALLY! I CAN MAKE YOU RICH! BOTH OF YOU! JUST TAKE ME HOME!
HE MUST DIE, NOW!
18

GR
AHH
MY GUARD WAS DOWN! DIDN'T HAVE TIME TO ERECT ANOTHER SHIE...
UGH!
WHAM
I'M COMING FOR YOU, BOY!
THERE'S NO ONE TO PROTECT YOU NOW!
NO! STOP! YOU CAN HAVE ANYTHING!
15

I WAS STUNNED... BUT NOT AS MUCH AS I LET ON. MY ONLY CHANCE WAS TO SURPRISE HIM... AND TO USE ANOTHER JAPANESE ART...AIKIDO.
I'VE GOT YOU PINNED, AKIRA. THIS WRIST LOCK CAUSES TOO MUCH PAIN FOR YOU TO CONCENTRATE. YOU CAN'T SUMMON UP ENOUGH KI TO SHOUT WITH POWER.
NOW, LISTEN TO REASON.
THIS BOY'S DEATH WON'T BRING KIKO BACK. IF YOU KILL HIM, YOU'LL PAY FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE... IN PRISON... IN GUILT... AND IN DISGRACE--TO YOURSELF AND YOUR COUNTRY.
YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE A MASTER OF SELF-DISCIPLINE...GET CONTROL OF YOURSELF!
VERY WELL... YOU CAN... RELEASE ME NOW. WE'LL TURN HIM OVER TO YOUR POLICE.


YOU ARE A WISE AND NOBLE MAN, DR. STRANGE.
I THANK YOU FOR STEPPING IN WHEN MY GRIEF AND RAGE BLINDED ME.
I WONDER, IF OUR POSITIONS HAD BEEN REVERSED, WOULD I HAVE ACTED DIFFERENTLY THAN HE?


AND SO DR. STRANGE RETURNS ALL CONCERNED TO THE DARK ALLEY IN GREENWICH VILLAGE.

THE KILLER IS TURNED OVER TO THE AUTHORITIES. THE CASE, IT WOULD SEEM, IS IRON CLAD. HE WILL PAY FOR HIS CRIME.

BUT, THE NEXT MORNING'S HEADLINES REVEAL OTHERWISE.
DAILY BUGLE
15¢
CONFESSED MURDERER GOES FREE!
COUSIN OF U.N. AMBASSADOR RELEASED ON DIPLOMATIC IMMUNITY
ACROSS TOWN ANOTHER HAS ALSO READ THE HEADLINES... AND HIS HOTEL SHUDDERS WITH HIS ANGUISHED CRY.